

Message Text

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44

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-07

OMB-01 TRSE-00 /064 W

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R 010852Z AUG 75

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6221

INFO USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 8869

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PROP CH

SUBJECT: DEBATE AT THECENTER OVER "BOURGEOIS RIGHTS"

REF: HONG KONG A-166

1. PEKING'S EARLY CAUTIONALY LANGUAGE ON RESTRICTING "BOURGEOIS RIGHTS" IN THE DITATORSHIP CAMPAIGN (HK 2796) REMAINS IN FORCE, BUT THERE APPEARS TO BE A PERSISTENT AND INCREASINGLY SERIOUS DEBATE OVER HOW MUCH RETRENCHMENT WILL BE ALLOWED TO TAKE PLACE IN ORDER TO PUSH ECONOMIC CONSTRUCTION IN THE PRC. MOST RECENTLY, OPPONENTS OF RETRENCHMENT HAVE BEGUN TO CRITICIZE LENIN'S NEW ECONOMIC POLICY (NEP), THE CLOSEST PARRALLEL TO PRESENT CHINESE POLICIES WHICH THEMSELVES WERE AGREED ON AT THE NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS IN JANUARY.

2. QUESTIONING OF POLICIES REACHED AT THE NPC HAS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE STABILITY OF THE LEADERSHIP CONSENSUS WHCICH WAS SET THERE AND, AT THE SAME TIME POSES PROBLEMS OF POLICY IMPLEMENTATION ACROSS THE COUNTRY. WITH SOME "REVOLUTION-FIRST" ENTHUSIASTS SEEKING TO PUSH THE CAMPAIGN TO RESTRICT
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"BOURGEOIS RIGHTS" TO OVERTURN PROTECTION AND GUARANTEES

PROVIDED IN THE CONSTITUTION, THE REGIME HAS BEEN FORCED TO PUT INCREASED EMPHASIS ON THOSE ELEMENTS OF BOURGEOIS SOCIETY WHICH ARE CONSIDERED VALUABLE AND WORTH MAINTAINING FOR THE PRESENT STATE. (THE CURRENT ACCEPTED RATIONALE FOR THEIR TOLERANCE IS THAT THEY CONTRIBUTE TO IMPROVING THE LIVELIHOOD OF THE PEOPLE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMY.) HOWEVER, UNLESS THE REGIME'S CONSENSUS MAKES ANOTHER FIRM COMMITMENT OF "UNITY AND STABILITY" ABOVE ALL ELSE, IT RISKS INCREASED SNIPING AT ITS CONSTRUCTION-ORIENTED POLICIES. IF, AS WE SUSPECT, THE COMMITMENT DOES COME ABOUT, WE ARE LIKELY TO SEE GREATER "FLEXIBILITY" IN POLICIES AND A FURTHER SLOWING OF CHINA'S PROGRESS TOWARD THE GOAL OF SOCIALISM. FURTHER DETAILS OF THE DEBATE ARE PROVIDED IN REF AIR.
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